

# Fraudulent Contractor Scams



**P**roperty owners rebuilding homes damaged or destroyed by natural disasters should be cautious of contractors seeking to take advantage of their misfortune.

Fraudulent Contractor Scams typically fall into two categories: Contractors working without a license and contractors – licensed or not – whose work is substandard or never completed.

Criminal penalties for either scam are significantly higher during a declared state of emergency. Unlicensed contractors who seek to repair property damaged by a natural disaster face fines of up to \$10,000, three years in jail or both. Contractors convicted of defrauding a property owner or tenant for repairs to a structure damaged by a natural disaster can be fined up to \$25,000.

To learn about other frauds, visit <http://da.lacounty.gov/community/fraud-alerts>



## Helpful Tips

Hire licensed and insured contractors. Check a contractor's license status with the Contractors State License Board at [cslb.ca.gov](http://cslb.ca.gov). Disaster victims may call the board's hotline at (800) 962-1125.

Ask friends, relatives, neighbors and co-workers for contractor recommendations and ask contractors to provide references.

Don't hire contractors who ask for the entire payment up front.

Have a knowledgeable friend, relative or attorney review the repair contract before signing it.

IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW HAS BEEN THE VICTIM OF A SCAM, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY.



<http://da.lacounty.gov>



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#FraudFriday



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